

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the following claims:

Claim 4, line 1, delete "3" and insert -1-.

line 2, delete "or continuously".

Claim 13, line 2, delete "halide" and insert -chloride-.

Please add the following new claim:

5
-21. The method of claim 1, wherein the elemental material or alloy is produced continuously.--

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is requested.

Claims 4 and 13-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The points raised by the Examiner have been attended to by the enclosed amendment to the claims. Accordingly, it is believed that the claims as now presented are definite within the requirements of §112, second paragraph, and the allowance thereof is requested.

Claims 9, 11, 13, 15, 16 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by the Homme U.S. patent no. 3,113,017. In the Examiner's view, the Homme '017 patent discloses reacting a TiCl_4 vapor with molten sodium to form titanium and NaCl and other products and separating the titanium from the salt and other products. The inert gas of claim 17, according to the Examiner, is disclosed in the Homme patent, column 5, line 39. The Examiner concluded that the Homme disclosure fully meets the limitations of the process as defined by the above-identified claims.

RECEIVED
TECHNOLOGY CENTER
DEC 12 2000

A